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 Serving you on: Comp-u-serve - Delphi - GEnie
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                    From the Publisher's Desk
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by Ron Kovacs

     Over the last 10 months, you have witnessed the slow and deliberate
growth of a major Electronic Online Computer Magazine, ST REPORT.

     Since the start of ZMagazine, I have spent 7 days a week gathering
and editing material for possible publication. Last July, when ZMAG ST
was published, I intended to go with a monthly supplemt to ZMagazine.
The original idea to provide ST material was the intention. Soon after
the first issue, we went to a bi-weekly format and at the start
of 1988 went to the present weekly format.

     Since we are still publishing the 8 bit ZMagazine, the added time
required to produce another magazine demands a great deal of time.
Resulting in my having insufficient time to devote to both publications.

This is all leading to the following announcement:

     During the past three weeks, you may have noticed some subtle changes
taking place within the magazine. Ralph Mariano has been quietly learning
the style we have set and also adding a few changes. While reading this
week's edition and the future editions to come, you will notice the
improved editorial managment Mr.Mariano brings to our magazines.

Effective with this issue, I would like to welcome Ralph F. Mariano as the new Managing Editor of our publications. In addition to the responsibilities of Managing Editor, He will also take on the added function of Assistant Publisher, American Publishing Enterprises Inc.

I wish to express that I am NOT leaving the magazine. I will however, be working on developing our new services and publications, soon to be announced. I will be frequenting the BBS systems supporting this publication.

The new direction we are taking is sure to bring the best possible News, Reviews and Technical assistance possible.

Please assist me in welcoming Ralph and the new writers that you meet in our publications. At this time, I wish to offer my sincerest thanks to all the fine Bulletin Board Sysops who have given such strong support to our magazines from the very beginning.

                                        Ron

From the Editor's Desk

A number of our regular features have been pre-empted for the coverage of the Spring Comdex Show. From what I observed, this show was BORING.

Question for ATARI: Why were all the PC supporters so ANGRY??

Hopefully, the future Shows out west will reveal more about the things to come that are MADE IN THE USA.   I hope....

It appears that only super good news is that Atari has CUT-OFF THE MAIL ORDER HOUSES...or is it good news?   Let's see if all the LITTLE dealers who have really kept the enthusiasm at high level through all these months of narrow profit lines are taken care of properly.

Next issue, ST REPORT will begin a series of articles on programming with "C". Also, an exclusive "UC" report on the inner workings of customer service and dealer support at Atari. Also, how an enterprising Authorized Atari dealer is taking advantage of the new "rules". (maybe he had advance notice of the changes)

We have a number of "special" correspondents who have expressed their wishes to remain anonymous, I will honor those wishes. If you see an item signed off by me, (ED), you will know that item is from a Confidential Source.

                            T."Rex" Reade

                    THE JUDGES LIST
                    ===============
          Service   Name

          CIS   Ron Luks
          CIS   Dan Rhea
          CIS   Mike Schoenbach
          Delphi   Clayton Walnum

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        Delphi                        Charles Bachand
        Delphi                        Maurice Molineux
        GEnie                         to be announced
Note: we await confirmation from the folks at GEnie..as soon as we know
we will have the list of Judges updated for your information.
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ST-Report Official Contest Rules
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No purchase necessary.

Deadline for consideration in this contest is midnight August 31, 1988.

Winners will be annouced in ST-Report on September 12, 1988.  We
guarantee to award all prizes. The prize list will be announced during
the contest.

All readers are eligible to enter except employees of APEInc.
Publishing, CompuServe, GEnie, Delphi and their immediate families.

This contest void where prohibited or restricted by law.  We are not
responsible for lost, mis-marked, or delayed art/work.

All submissions must be drawn with any Atari ST drawing program.

All submissions must be drawn by the original artist. Copyrighted art work
will not be accepted.

All submissions become the property of APEInc.

All submissions must be uploaded to specified BBS systems by the deadline
date. All systems have time and date stamping capability. Any entry dated
after 8/31/88 will be void from the contest.

Art Work Requirements
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All art work considered for this contest must be drawn with any Atari ST
drawing program.

Any person submitting art work must leave an address, telephone number,
and drawing program used.

Artwork must contain the following:

ST-REPORT

The winning entry will be used at a later date for a newsletter or
magazine cover.

Where to Send
-------------

        All art work may be uploaded to the following systems.

                Syndicate BBS   (201) 968-8148
                Bounty ST BBS   (904) 786-4176

Entries by mail are also permitted.  Be sure to use a 3.5 floppy S/S!
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You may send to:

                    ST-Report Logo Contest
                      Post Office Box 74
                 Middlesex, New Jersey 08846-0074

   (Please include your name, address and telephone number)

Updates

This contest will update uploading areas every two weeks. Contest rules
will not be changed, but judges may be added during the run of the
contest.

Current judge listing will be published next week.

This contest commences May 2, 1988 and will end Midnight August 31, 1988.

If you have any questions, Please leave email on the services at the
following addresses:

                CompuServe: 71777,2140
                GEnie   :   ST-REPORT
                          :   R.KOVACS
                DELPHI   :   RONKOVACS
                The Source: BDG793

Rules and Regulations:

1). Use any full color program written exclusively for the ST to draw
     your own personal design of an ST-Report logo.

2). Art work ported over from any other computer is void.

3). No X-rated art work will be accepted.

4). Winners will be announced by mail, email, phone call or equivalent
     on or before September 12, 1988.

5). Judges decisions are final.

                    DELPHI ATARI CONFERENCE 05/09/88
                    ================================

Edited by: Lloyd Pulley

AVAILABLE LIST: () = in conf
(MADMODIFIER),   (BERG),   (DAREKM),   (DFSCOTT),   (GURU2),   (REXREADE),
(BOBRETELLE),   (ANALOG2),   BIVEN,   (CWAIN),   (PIOTR),   (NEILHARRIS),
(HCALLESIS),   (MRGOODPROBE),   (STARWALKER),   (ANALOG4),   (JLSTOKES),
(DOCTORP), (RONKOVACS)

ANALOG2: Andy Eddy -- Moderator   NEILHARRIS: Neil Harris of Atari
ANALOG4: Clay   1BLAKE: Blake

```
BERG: Jim                           REXREADE: Rex Reade
RONKOVACS: Ron Kovacs               MRGOODPROBE: Mr. Goodprobe
DFSCOTT: D.F.Scott.(CS)             STARWALKER: Dave
DOCTORP: Phillip                    JLSTOKES
CWAIN                               DAREKM: Darek
JEFFWILSON: Steve Reiser            DISNEYNUT
GURU2: Jeff                         MADMODIFIER: Lloyd Pulley
HCALLESIS                           HALUEKING
BOBRETELLE: BobR                    PIOTR: Pete
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Andy> Let's start, shall we? Welcome to all and thanks to Neil Harris
for joining us from his busy schedule at COMDEX. To start, I'd like to
reiterate that this CO is a formal one. To ask a question (after I say
questions will be taken... in just a minute), type in a '?' and I'll put
you on the list. I'll keep you informed of when your turn is coming up.
Let's keep this meeting running as smoothly as possible; I know it'll
get emotional. Thanks again...

Andy> Before I start taking questions, let me start by asking something:
Neil, most of us are aware of a change in the Atari structure. What is
in the works for the computer side of Atari and what can you tell us
what we're going to see in the way of enhancements and such from you
folks.

Neil> We have several new people on board in the US computer division
(now called "Atari Computer"). The division is headed by Chuck Babbitt,
whose title is president. There is also a new vp of sales, Tony Gould.
Changed have been made to the field sales organization to promote the
business activities of computer specialty retailers -- specifically, we
have stopped using distributors and are in the process of hiring direct,
Atari-employed sales reps throughout the country. We are also beefing up
the marketing organization at Sunnyvale -- we've already added a new
telemarketing group, a newsletter person, and are seeking to fill
additional marketing positions. Also, we changed PR agencies, scaling
back our old agency and adding a computer specialty firm. We hope to
shortly hire an ad agency.

Reading the tea leaves, I have to think this means that corporate
management is getting very serious about the USA>.. they would not be
letting us spend the money to do all this otherwise.

Andy> Ok, if we can get a show of '?', I'll start with other questions.
Andy> Rex, go ahead.

REXREADE> The complaint noticed is: Using the esc. key to refresh an
open window, has to do with the way the NEW STs attempt to detect when a
disk has been taken out and another put in. Basically it strobes the
drive select line every vertical blank, then reads the write protect
status (the circuitry inside he drive was designed to return a certain
status when the disk is un-write protected and the drive is selected).
Setting the write protect to on makes the machine think that the disks
is being constantly swapped, so no reads are buffered. This whole
technique seems rather silly to me as 3 1/2" drives come with a specific
data line that indicates disk in or out! Is this condition with the new
drives being corrected?

Neil> I am not sure I can answer this question. My understanding is that
the issue of ESC keys not refreshing the drive directory is a hardware
problem which appears on some of the drives purchased from a specific

vendor. You seem to indicate that it is a software error in new ROMs --
I am surprised to hear that, although typically this would be a
production engineering issue rather than one for the US marketing
organization. Come to think of it, I am reasonably sure it is a hardware
issue, because our service department has been solving the problem by
swapping out drives should they prove defective. I would like to stress
that this problem is not by any means inherent in newer ST drives. Some
dealers have been complaining that reports of drive problems have
resulted in users demanding exchanges of drives regardless of whether
symptoms of this issue have appeared! If your drive refreshes the
directory on the desktop when the disk is changed and the ESC key is
hit, then it is fine and does not need any work.

REXREADE> CHINON model AA REV A.....this is the drive in
question....nothing to do with the roms.....I have had it happen here on
5 new machines.

Andy> Thanks, Rex... Darek? Your turn.

Darek> Neil, what's the current status of the availability of blitter
chips and ROM to n0n-developers in Canada and the US... secondly will
Megamax and Atari ever release Laser C with the developers kit?
Finally, I think the old ROMs also have an ESC key problem since closing
and reopening a window seems to work much better than pressing ESC.

Neil> The ROMs released for the Mega system are being viewed by the
engineering department as an interim set. There will be another ROM
release late this year, which will be made available to end users, along
with the fabled BLITTER chips, which should be in better supply at that
time. Personally, I had hoped to make the Mega ROMs available, but a
command decision was made to not do this because users would be unhappy
buying ROM revs too frequently. And in fact there are major changes
going into the next ROM set, much more than went into the Mega ROMs.

I doubt we will ship Laser C with the developers kit. We currently offer
either Alcyon C or Mark Williams C, and the developer has the option to
take either or neither of these they can simply get the documentation
and the support and buy the C compiler of their choice.

The only time when an ST should have a problem refreshing disk
directories or recognizing a media change is if the ID number is
identical on the two disks. If you look in the gemdos docs, you will see
that the mediach() call can return 3 states --changed, unchanged, or may
have changed. I don't know what the desktop does in the ambiguous case,
offhand.

Darek> ok then if Mega ROMs are just interim, does a 1040 owner have the
right to burn his own Mega EPROMS??

Neil> I doubt that our copyright lawyers are peeking into people's ST's
to see what ROMs they're using... but they will protect Atari's
exclusive rights to the Mega ROMs, if necessary.

Andy> Thanks, Darek. Jim Stokes, you're on. Anyone else wanting to ask a
question, please indicate with a ?. , Jim.

JLSTOKES> Has Atari made any progress finding a source for drams or
otherwise found a way to increase production and distribution of STs in
the U.S.

Neil> I don't know the answer to that. However, when the problem first
became apparent, Sam Tramiel predicted that its duration would be in the
6 month range. Judging by the planning in the US organization, I would
have to speculate that there is a good likelihood of greatly improved
product availability before too terribly long.

Andy> Ok, Rex.

REXREADE> I never inferred the refresh problem was anything but a drive
problem and I would like to know if there is any fix available for in
the field?

Neil> Speaking as someone who doesn't know one end of a soldering iron
from another, I don't know of a fix. We are simply swapping out the
problem drives.

Andy> Ok, Steve.
Andy> Others with questions please get your ? in now.

S.REISER> NEIL, First, Please tell my boss (Jeff Wilson) hello at
Comdex. Second, I have seen cases where We have sent a 'force media
change' to the OS and it doesn't seem to recognize it. Most of these can
be duplicated at the desktop. Is that an operating system bug? Can it be
worked around? Will it be fixed with these recently discussed 'Newer
ROMS'

Neil> There has been a discussion of the force media change function
online, either on BIX or on Usenet (I don't remember where). And since I
don't program at that level, I am not conversant with the answer to your
question. I am just a marketing guy! We'd need to run that question by
folks like Allan Pratt or Jim Tittsler. Sorry.

Andy> Ok, D.F. Scott.

D.F.Scott.(CS)> Neil, a report in Computer + Software News states that
Atari is planning to set up a traning program for Federated Group store
clerks who will be selling computers specifically--PCs, Amigas, and STs.
This has led some to respond that Atari is trying to become the next
Tandy, and is working to lock out its specialty channel from receiving
premiere shipments of new products. As Product Marketing Director, how
do you intend to establish a comfortable balance between your specialty
stores and your direct sales force in regions with Federated Group
stores?

Neil> It is an interesting issue. The management of Federated intends
for those stores to become more competitive in the computer business.
They feel that the way to become competitive is by enhancing their sales
force and support organizations. I think okay with you all that it
healthy! If Federated proves capable of operating at the same levels of
capability as current computer specialty dealers, I think that is very
healthy for the Atari marketplace. We have a long way to go to become
Tandy. And Federated stores are not a thing like Radio Shack stores.

D.F.Scott.(CS)> If Federated becomes too competitive, and if Atari has
no third-party distributors, where do the single Atari stores turn?

Neil> Dealers in Federated territories have been buying from Atari on a
direct basis all along, through sales reps employed by Atari. This
policy will continue. Are you suggesting that we restrain Federated
from becoming competitive?

D.F.Scott.(CS)> I'm suggesting that Atari has created ties to small stores which feel just as threatened by the name Federated as they are by "Egghead." If Atari can sell its own brand direct, and for less, and these stores have no choice but to buy from their competitor, won't they be forced to lock you out?

Neil> The point is, Federated is NOT trying to achieve market share in computers through predatory pricing policies. They are not as cutthroat in pricing currently as they were before the acquisition by Atari. We had been doing business with Federated (and another similar chain, Leachmere in New England) for years.
improved etc? There were many dealer complaints that Federated's prices were too low. Now that Atari owns them, the idea is to compete on the basis of support rather than price. I believe that this is healthy. I think you are making an error in semantics, DF --we are NOT tied to small dealers. We want our current small dealers to grow with us into big dealers! And that's what the dealers have told us they want to do.

D.F.Scott.(CS)> I was basically voicing the opinions of analysts at, I believe, Drexel Burnham Lambert.

.Neil> One last comment regarding Federated. What I hope for most is that, through owning and operating the Federated Group, our management becomes more sympathetic to the needs of the retailers in advertising, collateral materials, training, etc. The valuable experience we're gaining with this retailing venture can be applied to helping our dealer base.

.Andy> Interesting points, DF. Jim Stokes?

.D.F.Scott.(CS)> That's a very hopeful comment. Thanks, Neil.

JLSTOKES> There have been many rumors about developers leaving the ST market, is Atari aware of this and are they going to do anything to correct the situation?

.Neil> There have been rumors, although most of the rumored-about developers will not admit it to us! We are very sensitive to this sort of thing, and will do what we can to prevent it. We are getting more active in helping developers in the marketing side as well as in the technical side. Atari can't remain healthy if the developers are not thriving.

.Andy> Good question, Jim.. Rex?

REXREADE> Will Federated offer Service?

.Neil> Are you applying for a job? I believe that Federated is looking to provide service, yes.

REXREADE> not a chance.......just want to know because, if such is the case then the little dealer is in trouble trying to grow and compete in both areas.

.Andy> Jeff? Your turn.

.Neil> I just wanted to say that users feel comfortable getting service at the place where they purchased their equipment. While some of our existing dealers have strong service facilities, others prefer to sell

and support the systems and have less interest in the computer side. Some have suggested that we contract with national service organizations such as TRW to provide service. As for the little dealer competing -- Federated has a long long way to go. Dealers moving upscale into the small business, education, and corporate marketplaces, *especially* if they have outbound sales forces, ought to be very competitive.

.REXREAD> ok, thanks once again.....

.Andy> Jeff, now you can go. Sorry for jumping the gun, Neil.

.Jeff> I was wondering about the new atari computers and when we can expect newer TOS roms and GDOS. Also what is the main market that you are aiming for with the megas?

.Neil> By newer TOS roms do you mean the Mega roms or the next rev?

.Jeff> after Mega version

.Neil> We anticipate releasing the next rev of the roms late this year. The Mega is aimed at the small business market, primarily. We focusing on specific solutions where we are strong. Desktop Publishing is one very good one. We also have good Point-of-Sale solutions. MIDI is a hot area, although the 1040ST still predominates there. And we hope to use the Mega in a university push.

.Andy> Dave, you're up. Thanks, Jeff.

.Dave> Neil, what is the status of Deskset? When do you expect to release it, and what is the anticipated pricing range? Also, do you have any information on the delayed release of ReadySetGo?

.Neil> From my conversations with people at Letraset, it looks like work is not progressing on an ST port. They are going in other directions. Deskset's code is finished for release 1, and is being documented. Release 1 is not for the faint of heart, more for someone who understands Compugraphic typesetting systems. We are working inhouse on a later release which will support the GEM graphic environment. So, the first version should go on sale this summer, at a price point between $500 and $1000, with release 2 at an undetermined time and price now.

.Dave> Thanks.

.Andy> Steve?

.steve.reiser> Thanks, In the area of DeskTop publishing, you have a VERY fast Laser printer but I can buy an (industry accepted) HP series II for $500 dollars less. I am not complaining because of the help Atari has given us with the laser, but do you have any plans to 'let the price fall' to be more competitive with other already established Laser printers?

.Neil> We are comparing -- err, plums and pears here. The HP Laserjet carries a LIST price of $2399. Its street price has dropped to around $1700 in many areas. Our laser printer, which carries similar margins, has a LIST of $2000. As production increases, there may be more incentive for dealers to become aggressive on pricing -- but for now they choose to make some profit. Atari will be getting aggressive on pricing of bundled DTP systems, rather than on individual components. Details were finalized VERY recently in meetings with Sam Tramiel, but I

cannot go into them now because the dealers have not yet been informed of the program. By the way, I did say hello to Jeff Wilson today. And I expect 15% of your upcoming raise.

.Andy> Thanks, Steve. Darek...

.steve.reiser> thanks, Good luck and I hope you sell a million

.Darek> Will the "newer" ROMs still contain the old GEM, or will Atari have to switch to the latest crippled GEM (which I've seen and totaly hate!). Also, will the ST/Mega line ever have better graphics resolution, or is it eternally doomed with a 32K screen so that we all have to go buy ABAQs? Finally, is Atari getting involved with any of the developers of the 16MHz accelerator board(s) for the ST? (if so, and even if not, do you know when those will be available and from who?) And pleeeeeeeeeease kill the XE game system ads on TV.

.Neil> Atari has no intention of changing versions of GEM. At this time I cannot comment on anything related to unannounced 'products, which would include anything about screen resolutions. I am not playing coy with you, but this is not the forum for a product announcement, and none was made at Comdex/Spring. I have not yet seen the 16 MHz board -- it did not make it to the show here (the story I heard had something to do with grand theft: auto). Our engineers wonder just how effective a higher clock speed would be in improving the ST's performance. Our system of video/cpu interleaving of memory already pushes the system bus to the limits, and any faster chip is likely to result in many wait states and little speed improvement. Of course, we all hope the developers came up with something clever we hadn't thought of! As for XE GS on TV, if it sells, it will continue. I'd be happier to get the ST products on TV along side them and not in their place.

.Darek> Thanks..

.Andy> Thanks, Darek. Jim?

JLSTOKES> Is Atari still planning an IBM compatible hardware add on for the Mega and ST for the business market?

.Neil> That project had been in development, but after this long, I have lost track of it -- we were working with an outside engineering group. I am not sure it can be done at a lower cost than a complete PC clone, either.

.Andy> Thanks, Jim...

JLSTOKES> Don't you think that is necessary for the Mega to be taken seriously?

.Neil> It wouldn't hurt... but the ST or Mega should stand on its own merits or I doubt they can succeed regardless of compatibility.

.Andy> Go ahead, Andy.

DISNEYNUT> What can we as end users do to get more support for the Atari from local vendors? In my part of the country there is no Federated; software and service vendors are almost non-existent. Local user groups have petitioned software chains (like B. Dalton's) who recently dropped Atari, to no avail. Is there someone at Atari we could write to contact these vendors? Or are we stuck with mail-order?

.Neil> Where are you?

DISNEYNUT> Milwaukee, Wi

.Neil> Your area is currently suffering from the lack of a sales rep.
The last rep we had there is no longer with us, and we are very actively
seeking a replacement who is capable of servicing the midwest. Our
experience is that with a strong sales rep in the territory, problems
like this are solved very quickly.

.Andy> Good question, Andy... D.F. Scott is up.

.D.F.Scott.(CS)> I don't see why, in order for a computer to be taken
seriously it has to run substandard (read: PC) software. Anyway Neil, a
review of the Mega 4 in Unix Review Magazine stated, in rough terms,
that for what the Mega with IDRIS offered in terms of business
networking, a stripped Sun terminial would be much more preferable for a
slightly greater expense. With DRAM prices only going through higher and
higher roofs, can Atari afford to remain price-competitive?

.D.F.Scott.(CS)> [pardon my spelling, that should be "terminal."]

.Neil> DRAM prices are a factor to Sun as well as to Atari. Since we
like to price our products with slimmer margins than companies like Sun,
we refelect parts increases faster. But if DRAM prices stay higher,
other manufacturers will inevitably follow suit. We have already seen
prices of most '286 systems increasing.

.Andy> Thanks, DF. Dave, you're up..

Dave> Thanks. Neil, I've heard talk (read: vague, unsubstantiated
rumors) of third-party development of an add-on module for the SLM804 to
allow it PostScript capability...Presuming that this product actually
does appear, eventually, what level of support can we expect to see for
it from Atari?

.Neil> No can comment, sorry.

.Andy> Ok, MRGOODPROBE.

.Mr. Goodprobe> Neil, you mentioned "Point of sales", what are these,
and how come we have not heard of these previously?...thanks...

.Neil> POS systems take the place of cash registers. Systems currently
available include ones from Viewtouch (on display at Comdex) and from
Beckmeyer.

.Andy> Ok, Jim.. you're up.

JLSTOKES> Are there plans for any further Atari Fests (with or without
Atari) and will a list of them be made available?

.Neil> That is a good question. There are user groups planning Atari
fests without waiting for Atari to get involved, including Seattle this
weekend, Chicago in August, and L.A. in September. I am a big supporter
of fests with Atari's active aid, as is Sam Tramiel. My hope is to get
someone on board at Atari to handle coordination of the events.

.Andy> Ok, Neil is getting tired... last two questions: Jeff, your turn.

.Jeff> okay thanks, easy one for you.... will we ever see the Atari PC clones and when?

.Neil> In the latest issue of Stewart Alsop's PC Letter, he removed the Atari PC from the vaporware list into the special hall of fame for products that will *never* come out. Whereupon he received probably the first call ever from a company demanding to be placed on the list. We still plan to ship PC's into the US later this year. Although we will probably never ship the PC1 here, the one with no slots.

.Jeff> I read about something similar in PC work, thats why I was wondering thanks.

.Andy> Ok, lastly.... Lloyd, your turn.

MADMODIFIER> Is Atari doing anything to simplify GDOS? A tutorial, something to simplify the system....And is there someway to standardize GDOS....we have a 'standard' that isn't standard, everyone implements it differently

.Neil> Yes.

MADMODIFIER> care to expound?

.Neil> Not at this hour.

.Andy> Is the GDOS you mentioned from Germany defintely going to be the one for Atari to release next? Or are others still open for.. consideration (like CFJ's GLF GDOS)?

.Neil> It is not yet definite, it still has to pass muster. So others can still be considered.

.Andy> I think that about does it...Neil has been gracious enough to..go beyond the hour he set down. Thanks so much for your time, Neil...and thanks to all of you for your questions.

                    COMDEX CONFIDENTIAL REPORT
                    ==========================

Editor's Note...as of 05/12/88, we have received information that C.Babbit, the new Pres., of Atari Computer has stated that the only advertising Atari will do for the ST line will be on Cable TV.....ED.

According to C. Babbit ATARI will by the end of the year, ship all 520STFM units with double sided drives. The new ROM chips will be available (Fall/88) and will sell for around $50.00. ED.

The CHINON 3.5 d/s disk drive, MODEL AA REV A, is the confirmed culprit and ATARI will exchange them outright. ED.

ANY dealer who makes the claim that "if you didn't buy it (ATARI PROD.) from Him, he will not honor the warranty" will run the RISK of immediate REVOCATION of his Dealer Authorization! ED.

There will be an add on device for the SLM804 to enable it's use with
POSTSCRIPT. ED.

Spring Comdex, Atlanta, Report I

by Andrew Reese,STart Editor

     (Atlanta, GA, May 9, 1988) Atari was at the spring Computer Dealers
Exposition (COMDEX) in force this year with a large display area designed
around the theme of ST/Mega solutions to business problems. Atari itself
did not show any new hardware, but third-part developers presented several
exciting add-ons for Atari 68000-based machines and the software houses
caught a lot of interest with some highly professional packages.

     Although it was not in the booth, word has it that Atari's new
68030-based UNIX machine is progressing nicely, thank you, in the R&D Labs
at Atari, Inc.'s headquarters in Sunnyvale, California. Contrary to some
earlier press reports, it is not a "stock" Motorola UNIX design, but
instead is a custom Atari design with six proprietary chips on the
motherboard. The last of the custom chips has been received from the chip
house and installed on the new prototype PC board. This baby cooks along
at 16 MHz+ and right now the development looks to be on schedule. Watch
the pages of START and Antic's ST Resource for more details of this giant
step up in the Atari line.

     We'll have more news about other Atari developments tomorrow, but
let's turn our attention to the two add-ons that were shown by third-party
developers.

     The first is the amazing ST Accelerator from Megabyte Computers of
Webster, Texas. Despite the unfortunate circumstances of having their
car stolen (with their demo computers, hard drive and Accelerator inside!),
Megabyte demo'ed their hard-wire 16 MHz mod for the ST. Yes, that's right
, 16 Mhz clock rate or twice the standard ST clock rate! Installation of
the add- on board is not for the technically inexperienced, however -- it
requires the removal of the 68000 and the addition of a turbo board, a
68000-16 chip and a panel switch for choosing turbo/standard rate from
the keyboard. Speed can be switched in the middle of an application and
let me tell you that it sure makes the ST F-L-Y! It hasn't been tested on
all applications yet and there are certainly times when a mere 8 MHz is
plenty fast enough (want to go against the Dark Lord at twice the real
time speed????), but since it is easily switchable, it looks like a winner
for any power ST user. Should be available within the month; I put my
order in!

     And, for the power user with math-intensive software needs -- like
CAD, graphics, spreadsheets, etc. -- plug Xetec's XCEL hardware floating
point math processor into your cartridge port. Improvements in math
calculations are dramatic: on the order of 2-30 times! XCEL is complete
and awaiting FCC approval, which should take no more than two months.
Price? $199. Compare that to the price of an 80387 chip! One note,
however, XCEL does require that the software be recompiled using their

custom math libraries, so you won't see any immediate improvement in off-the-shelf software, but more than one leading developer of ST power software told me that they would be more than happy to support the new processor.

The ST desktop publishing market is certainly getting crowded -- and with quality products as good as or better than anything available on those "Brand X" machines. Timeworks showed their nifty Desktop Publisher ST, now available at $129, SoftLogik's powerful Publishing Partner Professional is getting closer to its announced June release (they really want to kill all the bugs first and it sure looks like they're doing it) and ISD was demo'ing their marvelous Calamus DTP package, due on the market within the next several months. Which to choose? We'll test them all and give you our recommendations over the next few months in the pages of START and Antic's ST Resource.

If you liked Barbarian from Psygnosis, get ready for Obliterator. It uses the same interface, but is set in the future. Great graphics and sound and now shipping.

Microprose was featuring Gunship on the ST in their booth and announced that they were shooting for a September release of the ST version of Pirates, their hot new game on those other computers. Microprose promises that they will take full advantage of the ST's capabilities; their past performance with Silent Service, F-16 Strike Eagle and Gunship seems to bear this out.

Antic showed the newest version of Cyber Paint, Version 2.0. This is truly fantastic graphics and animation software from the incredibly creative mind of Jim Kent, who brought you the first version AND Aegis Animator. For stand -alone 2D animation, there's nothing that can touch it on the ST -- and nothing in its price range on any other computer. Period. Also being shown was Antic's first venture into the Amiga world. Now, don't panic, folks, Antic's not leaving you Atarians behind. PHASAR, the popular ST home accounting package has been ported over to the Amiga to a very favorable reception. Antic also showed several other new ST packages including new design disks for CAD-3D and Shadow, a background terminal program that lets you go online and download files in the background while word processing or whatever at the same time.

Tomorrow, we'll take a look at Atari's CD-ROM and several other new and interesting developments in the optical drive field, new games, new MIDI software, a professional ST CAD package that'll make AutoCAD users envious and some other surprises.

Spring COMDEX, Atlanta, Report II

by Andrew Reese, STart Editor

ATLANTA, MAY 10, 1988 -- The second day in Atlanta featured with thunderstorms, traffic jams and record crowds at COMDEX. It also featured Atari and Commodore sharing the dais without bloodshed in a presentation called "Alternate Systems in Niche Markets: Amigas and Ataris."

Neil Harris, now the Director of Product Management for the Computer Division of Atari U.S., and Ken Weber Vice President of Sales for Commodore, traded jibes and optimistic views of their respective markets, but the bottomline seemed to be that the two companies will now target

their marketing at specific "niche" markets. What this means is that you Will probably see ad campaigns aimed at specific uses of the two computers. Commodore is aiming at the "Desktop Presentation" market, while Atari is focusing their efforts on such uses as MIDI and Desktop Publishing.

Atari is not shy about declaring or displaying their intentions: the Atari booth at this primarily business-related show is notable for the predominance of monochrome monitors and business-related software. Now if the DRAM shortage eases a bit, Atari should be well positioned for a strong push in the third and fourth quarters of the year.

Speaking of monitors, one of the most dramatic developments in ST displays was unveiled today when ISD hooked up a 19-inch high resolution Moniterm monitor to a Mega 4 and displayed their Calamus DTP package in crisp, bright 1280-by-960 resolution. The display requires a videocard that plugs into the Mega's internal bus port and using a patched TOS on disk to get around the TOS-in-ROM video definitions. Pricing and availability has not been set for this spectacular product, but look for it during the second half of the year. Oh, and it can put out a high-resolution color signal, too...

[Editor Note: The Videocard, Monitor and Program were all from Europe.]

While it's not an Atari product, I have to mention that RasterOps of Cupertino, California displayed an amazing display for the Mac II. Their TrueColor 104 board and Model1948 Monitor combine to display 1024 by 768 pixels with 24 bit planes per pixel. In plain language, this means 786,432 colors on the screen at once from a palette of 16.7 million colors! Sigh! But this graphics power definitely has with a price -- the board and monitor are each $3195 -- and that's on top of the price of a Mac II. (Oh, even the swivel and tilt base for the 19-inch monitor costs...are you ready?...$295!)

Back to Atari. Atari's CD-ROM player was shown in its final production version. The developer's systems should be shipping within a few weeks and you should be seeing it in your local Atari dealers this summer. Atari waited to sell the CD-ROM until they could get it out the door at their chosen price, in this case $599. That's half of what Apple's recently-announced CD-ROM will list at and the Atari CD-ROM will play audio CD's as well. With the Atari's support of High Sierra and other major formats, software should become available quickly.

If you've been wondering when you can buy the new TOS ROM's, the short answer is that you can't -- for now. This upgrade was an interim re-design and a second upgrade is in the works. Atari has been soliciting suggestions for re-works on the various online services and are now finalizing their plans for redesign. They are focusing their attention right now on the GEMDOS portion of the ROM's with an eye toward greatly increasing the speed of screen operations. Look for these ROM's to hit the market in the fall. The price for what Atari annouonced as a "major improvement" has not been set.

If you're worried about viruses infecting your ST's operating system, you can breathe a small sigh of relief -- Neil Harris announced that Atari U.S. has yet to see any evidence of a virus on the ST. With TOS in ROM, St'ers are a bit safer than other brands with significant portions of their operating systems on disk (I won't mention any names, but their initials are MS-DOS, Mac and Amiga). As Harris said, "No one is going to come to your house with an EPROM burner!" (Oh, and by the way, rumor has

it that a minor virus even infected the Amiga Developer's conference
recently held in Washington, D.C.!)

Robtek Ltd. announced two new programs for the ST, available now.
Dizzy Wizard is "the game that Marble Madness should have been." While I
haven't been able to boot it up at the show, the screen displays on the
packaging look great. $19.95. Aimed at the low-end DTP market, Home
Publisher has many of the same basic features as higher-priced programs,
but at a cost of $39.95.

Scott, Foresman and Company announced a new book of interest to the
ST community. "Learning C on the Atari ST" looks like a good tutorial and
reference for budding C programmers -- and also for those old flowers
among us.

If you have a lot of disks or just need a convenient system to store
those you have, Seima International Corp. showed their Exponent modular
drawer and attache-style systems. Each drawer holds 180 3-1/2-inch disks
and lists for $69.95, while the attache case holds 64 disks in a
convenient hard plastic case that lists for $39.95. Looks like an
attractive Italian import.

SBT announced their Series Six upgrades to their Database Accounting
Library. Final debugging of the ST version is about complete, so look for
these new products within the next few months -- and look for a review of
these powerful packages in the October, 1988 issue of START, on sale
September 1st.

One of the most remarkable new products for the ST was shown by
Intersect Software, makers of Interlink. Revolver allows the user to
"take a picture" of the ST's memory at any time, during any application,
and save it to disk in compressed format. Then, when you want to come
back to it, you just "roll it in" and you're back where you were --
exactly where you were, whether you were about to be killed by a monster
in a game or were checking the fourth quarter's performance of your
company in a spreadsheet. It should be available at the end of June for a
price of $49.95.

Michtron will be shipping Leatherneck for the ST within a few weeks.
This Viet Nam-style combat game is slated to list at $39.95.

Also due to be released soon is Paperboy, a port from the popular
arcade game. It's from Mindscape and will list at $49.95.

More tomorrow from Atlanta. We'll put some Band-aids on our blisters
and hit the show floor for another round. Who sez that Editors shouldn't
get combat pay?

Spring Comdex, Atlanta, Report III

by Andrew Reese, STart Editor

Day 3 of the Computer Dealers Exposition (COMDEX) dawned bright and
clear and the show floor was jammed with suits and nerds. Expectations
are that by the time all of us make our way through the show, our number
will have set a new record for a Spring COMDEX of over 60,000! That's a
lot of suits and nerds, folks.

More news of interest to Atarians:

* -- Liz and Kevin Mitchell of Migraph were displaying EZ-Draw with
Supercharger, their fine DTP/page layout package; expect to see some
further refinements of this versatile package in the months to come. Liz
had a great suggestion for users groups around the continent: please find
out the dates of the major computer shows and try to schedule your own
Atari expositions around them. You'll have a much better chance of seeing
the majors at your shows if they're not off in Atlanta or Chicago or
somewhere at COMDEX, CES, NAMM, etc. Watch the pages of START and Antic
for upcoming show dates.

     * -- Neocept was proudly displaying their word processor package
called Word Up. They're making improvements and enhancements every day
and upgrading their purchasers' copies diligently. If you haven't taken a
look at this very capable WYSIWYG program, do so before choosing among the
wealth of Atari word processors available now. Word Up has some excellent
features not found in any other package I've seen.

     * -- Michtron has announced a whole series of new products centered
around their emerging standard BASIC, GFA BASIC. GFA BASIC Training
ReBoot Camp is their new beginners guide to programming in GFA. It
presumes no prior experience in programming and takes you step-by-step
through the development of your program; $19.95, out now. At the other
end of the spectrum from "ReBoot" is The GFA BASIC Programmers Reference
Guide, Vol. 1. This is the first half of the definitive work on GFA
BASIC by George W. Miller. It should hit the bookstores in late June
with a bang; $29.95 for 576 pages of all you ever wanted to know about
GFA BASIC. GFA BASIC 3.0 was announced at CeBIT, the Hannover computer
show, and will be shipping in mid-July. It adds over 300 new commands to
GFA BASIC and a substantial increase in speed: 40 to 60 percent! Finally,
the GFA-BASIC Reference Card is shipping with a $4.95 price tag. Michtron
also showed GFA Draft, Juggler II, Master CAD and Utilities Plus -- it
looks like Gordon and company have been very busy this spring!

     * -- ICD was showing their quiet and convenient line of ST hard
drives called the FA-ST Hard Drive. Available in sizes to fit almost
every need and budget from 20 meg at $699.95 to 100 meg (dual 50's) at
$1699.95. Or if you already have an IBM-compatible hard drive lying
around, they have a kit to transform that paperweight into an asset for
your ST. Ask for the FA-ST Hard Drive Kit. Or look for the ST Host
Adapter at $135.95 if you want to build up your own drive from components
available for IBM's, etc.; $135.95. And there's still more options
available for hard drives from ICD - -check with your dealer.

     * -- If your data has not been saved, Saint Silicon Incorporated can
save it and your sense of humor. Just pickup The Binary Bible by Jeffrey
Armstrong for a load of laughs; Any Key Press, Santa Cruz, California,
$14.95

     * -- There's lots of new printers and modems here. We'll look at some
of them in the next report -- and take another look around the Atari
booth. We'll focus on MIDI and make sure that you know what we saw in
Atlanta.

****

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

****

              NEODESK... A new look for an old friend.
              ==

by T."Rex" Reade

As PLAINLY stated in the manual, Neodesk is an alternative to the
standard GEM desktop that is installed in your Atari ST Computer.
Frankly, I have seen many messages pro and con Neodesk....As far as this
author is concerned, I feel it is a refreshing breath of fresh air amid
all the hot air about the GEM desktop and all the hullabaloo about how to
improve the desktop.

The best way to look at Neodesk (I think) is to consider all the finer
points of operation and then look at the drawbacks of using it, then make
up your mind as far seeing if it will do what you wish it to do and if you
are comfortable with it.

In my humble opinion, NEODESK is a MESSAGE from the voices of all of us to
Atari saying, "Don't do away with GEM desktop, but please look at this and
ADD the best of NEODESK to what we have now." I took the liberty of
allowing NEODESK to be shown to the usergroup I belong to, and not to my
surprise.....THE NEW USERS LOVED IT and the OLD TIMERS TOOK THE TIME TO
FIND FAULT. That told me that the big thing to consider here is the fact
that the very basic ideal of human nature is to resist change....oh well
so be it..

In looking over the big picture here, it comes to light that NEODESK does
indeed have a FEW shortfalls. BUT, instead of doting on those which are
no text mode and large memory consumption, lets look at the bright side.

What better way to bring a new user up to speed than with PICTURES?
Neodesk is Icon based and therefore allows the new user the opportunity to
see all in simple icon format. You can be sure that over the next few
months, Gribnif will make some changes to NEODESK and I wouldn't be
surprised if the memory usage is curtailed a great deal by either a
possible rewrite or a highly configurable program, ie, use of buffers
and the inclusion of a text mode.

In any case, NEODESK is, for the money, a fine programming effort designed
once again to show the world the power of the ST and hopefully send a
message to ATARI,"give 'em a few ideas on how to soup up the existing
desktop."

Included here is one of the many comments from the users about NEODESK.

                    * NEODESK - THE GEM ALTERNATIVE *

I know, I know, another desk accessory that does this and does that.
WRONG!!!   This is the best icon based program I have seen for the ST
Computer so far. NeoDesk takes up about 145K of RAM on the ST computer.
What? You say? 145K?! That's so much RAM! Well, let's put it another
way, how many desk accessories do you have to load to format disks,
copy files back and forth and perform a host of other I/O functions?
Probably a bunch and that means eating up RAM too!
Here is a sampling of what NeoDesk can do for you.......

        For starters :

        Handles seven windows up at one time.
        Built in Icon Editor.
        Fast file copies (Smart too, tells you how many disk swaps!)
        Lets you batch print your documents and change the order while
        printing.
        You can drag your program icons onto the desktop without the
        irritating "You cannot drag files onto desktop!".

The NeoDesk disk contains an assortment of great files to use when you
first boot up. It contains Three main folders, NeoDesk itself,
Icon edit, and the Extra folder, which contains helpful files for you
to enjoy.

I am happy to report that NeoDesk is not copy protected so it's
a breeze to install on a hard disk system. My favorite desk accessory
used to be DCformat but with NeoDesk, when you want to format a floppy,
you click on format from the desktop and up pops a window that gives
you the choice of 9 or 10 sectors per track and 80 or 81 tracks. I
really like the format options instead of having to make do with the
standard TOS format.

Another nifty feature is that when you are copying files and you
change your mind and want to abort the copy, you simply press UNDO or
Control C and it will stop.

There are some limitations though, for instance, you can only have
18 drive icons on screen at one time (Who in the world has 18 disk
drives!). You can only have 64 icons visible at once (Shame, shame...
ONLY 64?). And only 112 viewable files in any one sub-directory!
If that's the limitations, can you imagine the powerful features this
program has?

I can't go into too much detail about the printer options
because frankly I haven't had that much time to use that portion of
the program. I have, however, played around with the icon editor and
let me tell you, after seeing the wealth of great looking icons that are
included it's hard to imagine wanting to change any of them but the fact
is YOU CAN IF YOU WANT TO.

That's all I can tell you about this fabulous program. In my opinion it
has every feature you would want at your fingertips without taking that
much memory. If you were to add up all the desk accessories available
and used them all at once, you would probably use as much or more memory
than NeoDesk uses. Let me add this to the argument too, how many desk
accessories would conflict with each other when used together?

In trying to describe all the great features of NeoDesk, I almost
forgot to tell you the best feature of all, the price. You would probably
expect to pay a small fortune for this program. Well, hold on to your
socks.
                     NeoDesk retails for $29.95!

In my opinion, this price makes NeoDesk one of the BEST DEALS in
computer applications around. Once installed, it manages your ST like
a computer should be run, with efficiency and power. It sure is a
welcome sign to see such superior quality software written by the folks
at Gribnif Software. This just reinforces my belief that companies like
Gribnif deserve our support. I'll gladly purchase software from this
company in the future and they can expect my business ANYTIME!

                              from,
                           Myles Goddard
                            JAX, FLA.

                    NEODESK- The Desktop Alternative
                           By Dan Wilga
                          Gribnif Software
                          P.O. Box 350
                         Hadley, MA 01035

REX'S RATING: *   USER FRIENDLY: 08   *   DOCS: 08   *   VALUE: 09

     Using a 4375M Thompson-MGA Multi-sync monitor with the ST.
     ===

   1) You must invert the Horiz and Vert Sync (use 4069 IC)
   2) Use Practical Solutions Monitor switcher
   3) Monitor does not have audio, must use external amp and speaker
   4) Add 68 ohm resistors in series with RGB from Computer.

   Picture Clarity:

   The DOT Pitch on the Thompson is the same as the original ST Color
   monitor (.31) and the convergence on this monitor is very good. The
   only problem I have is that it is a 14 inch monitor and you need to

sit back another two feet for the scan lines to look the same (the
Atari Monitor is a 12 inch). Or you can reduce the size of the screen
with the Vert and Horiz size controls.

Monochrome is good (higher scan rate) but you need to change the vert
size to max to get the proper ratio (Horiz/Vert size).
You need to add 68 ohm resistors in series with the RGB lines from the
computer as Color output has a tad too much drive for this monitor.
Monochrome out from the ST needs to drive three lines (R,G,B) and loads
down so that its drive is slightly lower. (resistors not needed)

Features:

This monitor has superimpose ability, multi-sync ability, switching
from TTL to Analog mode with either a switch or line going high-low
on the Analog plug. Composite Video, TTL, EGA , VGA, PGA and Analog
modes are all supported.

Conclusion:

This monitor should give you a very usable picture and give you the
added benefit of having Mono mode available with the click of a button.
Not to mention that the new Computers Atari is coming out with will
need a Multi-Sync for those higher resolutions and more colors.

By the way the current price of this monitor is $399.00 mail order.

Technical notes:

 Thompson brings out a 5v supply on the Analog plug that you can
 use to power the sync invertor (4069 IC) this line can't power
 anything more than .25W. I used 1/2 of a printer cable I had
 lying around...the DB25 male that plugs into the ST for the
 Analog plug to the Thompson.

Below are the pin assignment for the ST and the Thompson (MGA Diamond
scan).

  Thompson DB 25 Plug   Atari Monitor Plug

  Pin # Signal description   Pin #   Signal description

   2   Red video .6v +going   7   Red Video 1VPP +going
   4   Green video .6 +going   6   Green Video 1VPP +going
  14   Blue video .6 +going   10   Blue Video 1VPP +going
  16   Horiz sync TTL Pos   9   Horiz Sync TTL Neg
  17   Vert sync TTL Pos   12   Vert Sync TTL Neg
  21   5 Volt supply   8   12 Volt supply for pullup
   1   Ground   13   Ground
   3   Ground   1   Audio output
   5   Ground   4   Monochrome Detect
  15   Ground   11   Monochrome 1vpp +going
  25   Ground

There are many ways that you can connect, using switches relays or
solid state switching IC's, these pins together to achieve Mono and
Color modes. I'll just give examples for both modes and leave the
actual choice of method to you.

```
************* COLOR *************

  Thompson        Res 68 ohm            Atari
    Pin 2---------~~~------------------Pin 7
    Pin 4---------~~~------------------Pin 6
    Pin14---------~~~------------------Pin 10


               4069 IC    (Sync Invertor)
               |---------|
   Pin 9 Atari -|1     14 |--5v Pin 21 Thompson
Pin 16 Thompson-|2     13 |-Gnd
  Pin 12 Atari -|3     12 |
Pin 17 Thompson-|4     11 |-Gnd
         Gnd -|5     10 |
              |6      9 |-Gnd
         Gnd -|7      8 |
               |_____|
```
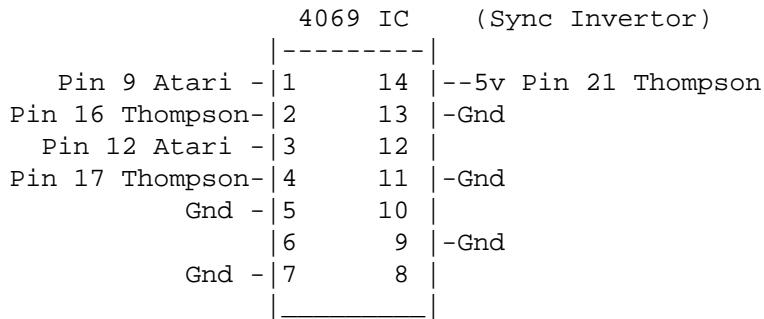
All grounds are carried through. Pin 14 of the 4069 is bypassed
to ground with a 4.7 Ufd cap. Unused input pins on logic chips
should not be allowed to float. They must be attached to ground or B+.

```
*************** Monochrome **************

   Thompson                   Atari

   Pin 2--------------------Pin 11
   Pin 4--------------------Pin 11
   Pin 14------------------Pin 11
                           Pin 4 to Gnd (Mono Switch Line)
                           Pin 13 Gnd

   All grounds carried through....use same Sync circuit.
```

Sync is the same for both Color and Mono mode. Audio is not
provided in the Thompson Monitor and you will have to provide an
external amp and speaker for the sound.

The most important thing to realize is that monochrome and color
lines can not be hooked up at the same time, that's why you need
a multi-pole switch like in Monitor master and the new Astra Monitor
switch box. You can buy one from the above companies.
The only part that might be hard to get would be the Atari Plug. One
source of the Monitor Plug is Practical Solutions 602-884-9612.

There are many possibilities allowed for in design of the Atari
Monitor output plug. Pin 3 of that plug is a general purpose
Output line that can be used to throw an electronic latch so that
no mechanical button is necessary to switch between Mono and Color
mode.

                    Jeff Rigby
               Intersect Software Corp.
                   3951 Sawyer Rd.
                 Sarasota, Fl. 34233

                         INTERLINK PC Pursuit Help
                         =========================

by: Randy Mears

Until INTERLINK ST is upgraded to contain a script language (and it will
be so upgraded) you can get around quite well in PC Pursuit without one.

The first thing you need to do is create a special Phone File for your
PC Pursuit dialing. The primary difference between this file and a normal
Phone File is that the Modem Parameters are changed to disable the Hang-Up
and increase the timeout values. This will allow you to use the standard
dialer buttons to dial numbers within a given area. You can even use the
group dialing capability to check multiple numbers within that area.

In addition, function key definitions that will allow you to disconnect
from your current area and connect to a new area need to be defined so that
you can easily move from one area to another.

And, finally, a recording that will allow you to continuously retry area
dialing until you get a CONNECT rather than those all too familiar BUSY's.

Enclosed in this archive is a sample PC Pursuit Dial File (PCDIAL.DAT).
You can load it in INTERLINK as a Phone File and create your own function
keys using the model contained in the Control/F10 Function. Just insert
the desired area code and your user id and password. If you desire
automatic retry keys add this string to the end of your area call function
['''''^nn] where nn is the function number (1-20) of the key being defined.
This will cause the key to be repeated after a 12 second pause. When
you get connected you can break out of this loop by pressing a function
key that has nothing defined (I use ALT/F2). You can break out of this
loop manually or, you can use the enclosed recording to do it
automatically. You can start the recording and then press the function
key you desire or change to another function key mid-stream. Don't forget
to save this new Phone File with some other name than your normal one!

The recording is called PCCOD.REC. It waits forever for a CONNECT from
PC Pursuit and, upon getting one, breaks the Function Key loop by pressing
ALT/F2 (important that you leave it blank) and sending ATZ<cr> to PC
Pursuit. It plays the completion tone to let you know that you have
connected.

I use this technique constantly on PC Pursuit and find that I can move
around quickly and find lots of Boards to connect to. It is convenient
to add the required Area Code for a given board to its NAME description
in the dialer window. This way you know what area is needed for a given
board. You may just want to make a different Phone File for each area
but I tend to put about 4 areas per Phone File and have about 6 such
files descriptively named.

Hope this information is of help in your PC Pursuits.
If you would like further information or clarification please
feel free to call our BBS at (813) 924-4590. It will be a long distance
call for most of you and we try to answer your questions within 24 hrs.

VDOS Software System Information
                    ================================

The VDOS Software System is designed to be a significant addition to any
ST user's software library that has the following MINIMUM hardware
configurations:

     520 ST with dual drives   <or>   520 ST with hard disk

     520 ST with a 1/2 Megabyte or more memory upgrade

     1040 ST   <or>   1040 ST with hard disk

     Mega ST   <or>   Mega ST with hard disk

       (All above combinations serve a successful VDOS installation)

The absolute optimal system setup is a 1MB machine with a hard disk and
VDOS installed in RAM and autobooted with the provided GEMSTART.PRG.
Lesser hardware configurations are still extremely effective and equally
as useful.

                           Product Description

VDOS is a Virtual to Disk Operating System Shell with a graphical
interface. Up to 53 Autoexecute Programs may be defined in the
VDOS.INF file (Library), for later execution with a single mouse click or
key combo press. The beauty of this feature is that no matter what the
nesting of your program is, it only takes a single mouse click once the
appropriate pop-up menu is easily displayed.

Another bonus is that when you execute a program from the VDOS main
screen, only about 10K of memory is retained by the VDOS system thereby
allowing nearly all memory to be released for the called application.
This is an innovative and significant software engineering feat that is
compatible with all but a few existing ST programs. VDOS is even
compatible with Beckemeyer's MTC Shell & Micro-RTX when they are executed
under VDOS control.

Imagine a software development session where you press two keys to
execute your Editor, work on the source, then exit. Next to Compile the
source, press two more keys. When you are done two more key presses call
your Linker into action. What a savings in the amount of time expended.
No CHDIR commands to fool with! Just simple key presses to call up the
desired programs for you.

VDOS doesn't stop there.... You can also define a default Graphics,
Financial, Database, Terminal, and alternate CLI in addition to the
Editor (or Word Processor), Compiler, and Linker that are executed with
two key presses or by a single mouse click. And, for those power users
out there... You can define ANOTHER FORTY FIVE applications in your
library for single mouse click execution!

Keep in mind that VDOS has many facets for every ST user (That has the
minimum hardware requirements), for example most of the functions offered
by VDOS have both Keyboard and Mouse selections supported. The Beginner
can quickly learn to use the VDOS software system with the aid of the

GEM Mouse Pointer, and the unique ' Bottoms Up ' Menuing system, while
the Power User can utilize nearly all of the power presented by VDOS with
only the use of the keyboard.

Now if that isn't enough.... We have added over 45 DOS
utilities of which most can be called into action with a single
mouse click, or key press. All of the most commonly used DOS
utilities are in the software such as:

MEMFREE	MORE	PRINT	FORMAT	DIR-X
CHECK	PRINT	DEL	COPY(FAST!)	VERIFY
CHDIR	MKDIR	RMDIR	CHMOD	WHERE?
FIND	TOUCH	CALENDAR	SCREEN SAVER	ACCESSORY
FDATIME	DATE TIME	DEFINE SLOT	CLEAR SLOT	REBOOT

                     AND MUCH MORE........

Not to be confused with a standard CLI (Command Line
Interpreter), VDOS gives you a graphical interface to work with,
or if you chose a single keypress to execute a DOS function (in
most cases).

We are confident that most, if not all of you will be very
impressed with the facility that VDOS offers. And you can't beat
the cost.... It's FREE! You may freely distribute the VDOS
Software System as you please so long as it is distributed in it's
ENTIRETY! Please read full details contained in the online VDOS
Help function.

Some of you may now be wondering why a small Software Development
Company is offering a commercial quality product to the public at
no charge. The answer is that software piracy has slowly begun to
destroy the ST commercial market, and we felt that this would be an
excellent way of testing the waters for the introduction of powerful
Shareware to the public.

IF the user decides that VDOS is indispensable to his or her ST
installation, they may send $25 plus $2 shipping and handling to us in
payment (Check or Money Order only please).

In return, the registered VDOS owner will receive a beautifully printed
100+ page manual in it's own binder and chocked full of information,
command descriptions, limitations, a myriad of installation options, a
large glossary, bibliography, and a helpful set of appendices. But
remember that the Shareware Software System as posted is FULLY FUNCTIONAL
and has not been crippled in any way!

If you become an avid VDOS user you will DEFINITELY want to purchase
the manual at the reasonable price mentioned above. Also with your
registration of VDOS, you will be placed on our mailing list so you
may be notified of any updates or changes to the software or manual.

We are gambling a bit on presenting our work in this manner,
but feel that there are enough honest ATARI ST users out there to
make our work worth while. If enough interest is generated, we
will have the incentive to continue supporting the software &
perhaps offer other products to the public at minimal cost in the
future. Although we are a small company we have some impressive
qualifications under our belt. We have produced the following
ST software works.

The GFA Basic Companion 1.0 & 2.0
                        (MichTron, Inc.)

                       The Vocabularian
                       (STart Magazine)

                 The Popular Public Domain GFATIP series
                       (BBS's Everywhere)

You will be getting a software product that has been beta tested and
improved upon since December 1987, and we feel it is very sound.
Many of the popular ST hardware combinations have been tested and all
passed the critical beta testing schedule.

                         John B. Holder
                       Senior Software Engineer
                       Marathon Computer Press

                    CompuServe = 75766,505
                       GEnie = MCP.TECH01

                       IT'S ABOUT TIME!
                       ================

by T."Rex" Reade

What a pleasure to see some of the better "Shareware" programs coming
along with the concept of you like it? YOU BUY IT!

My only reservation is the fact that the VDOS program is aimed a such
specialized market. This may be a very strong factor in deciding whether
or not the product is supported by the Atari Userbase. It would be fully
expected that the first thing we would hear is "THOSE CHEAP ST USERS"!
Well lets look at it this way a universally needed program like Desk
Manager V2.1 or L_Utility will more than likely see a much higher
response and justly so, VDOS seems to be aimed primarily at programmers.
We certainly hope that the final decision is not entirely based on the
response received by VDOS alone.

With my heartfelt thanks I extend a sincere congratulations to John B.
Holder, Charles F. Johnson and Keith Ledbetter. What courageous souls
these men are.....

The three programs most recent in this arena are:

             V-DOS..............from ...John B. Holder
             Desk Manager 2.....from....Charles F. Johnson
             L- Utilities.......from....Keith Ledbetter

To pioneer this effort, to allow the you (the user) to try the programs
and then, if they are to your liking, send in a few dollars and kind
words to obtain the documentation and updates is really outstanding.
I can think of no better way to thwart piracy than give the user the
opportunity to look the goodies over and then, pay for it. I realize

this is very risky and most certainly you do also. We must, if this
fine method is to continue, support these folks in their superb endeavor.

You may download all of these programs from the services........
[CIS-DELPHI-GENIE] and try them out. BUT, if you do, and you like what
you have downloaded....
PLEASE send the author his just deserts! Without a doubt you (the users)
are getting a terrific break.

FOR EXAMPLE:

            NO fancy packages   NO expensive middlemen
            NO expensive ads   NO hidden mark-ups
            NO arguments with a dealer over a return policy.

Best of all, NO getting stuck with a program that was sold to you
that you really didn't need.

As you can readily see, this is about the best way, (almost Utopian), to
buy software. Folks, don't let this opportunity slip between your
fingers, show these Authors that their faith in you is warranted,
send them the dollars and the kind words for taking such a gamble on the
integrity of the ATARI USERBASE......Let's show them AND the entire
Computing industry that WE, the ATARI USERBASE really know a good thing
when we see it and will give it our fullest support. Besides, doing it
this way separates the "men from the boys"....how? easy, A programmer has
to make his reputation depend on the "try me" software he places out here
for all to look over.....if this takes hold, the days of the fancy package
containing the ripoff software are numbered.

Congratulations once again! I hope you have all the success imaginable
with this noble experiment.

APEInc. Newswire

Compiled from NewsNet

                  ATARI CORP CORPORATE EARNINGS
                  ===============================

            Latest Period   Year Earlier
Atari Corp (1st Q)
            $169,232,000 $65,133,000
             $5,674,000 (.10)   a-$9,365,000 (.16)
                   a-Net from operations.

   ATARI FIRST-QUARTER EARNINGS DOWN NEARLY 63 PERCENT AT $5.7 MILLION
   ==

SUNNYVALE, Calif. (MAY 13) UPI - Atari Corp. reported earnings in the
first quarter of 1988 fell nearly 63 percent to $5.7 million or 10 cents
a share, down from $15.3 million or 26 cents a share in the same period
last year.

However, revenues for the Sunnyvale-based maker of personal computers and

video games rose to $169.2 million in the quarter ended April 2, up more than 61 percent compared to $65.1 million in the first quarter of 1987, the company said, in a statement released late Thursday.

Atari blamed the downturn in its earnings on losses incurred by the Federated Group Inc., it's retail subsidiary, which it acquired in October 1987.

The Federated division reported a pre-tax operating loss of $9.6 million on sales of $71.5 million in the first quarter of 1988. Not counting that loss, Atari's earnings would have been $15.29 million in the first quarter up marginally over $15.28 million last year, the company said.

First quarter results last year were boosted by a $5.9 million credit related to accounting changes, the company said.

"The losses incurred by Federated ... continue to adversely impact Atari's earnings," said Sam Tramiel, Atari's president.

But he added that Federated "is now approaching a breakeven point and we forsee a small loss or a small profit in the second and third quarters," and "a modest profit" in the fourth quarter.

"Further action is being taken to reduce costs, improve product mix and margin, and to increase sales," Tramiel said.

FRIDAY'S AMEX 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS
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NEW YORK (MAY 13) - The 10 most active stocks in American Stock Exchange composite trading Friday:

Stock	Sales	Last	Net Chg.
Sothebys Hldg	1,143,800	18 1/8	unch
Dome Petrol	1,008,400	1 1-16	off 1-16
Amdahl Corp	621,400	47	up 3/4
ICH Corp	499,800	7 5/8	off 1/8
Lorimar Tel	267,000	12 3/4	off 1/4
Wang Lab B	187,700	10 5/8	off 1/4
Viacom pf3.87	187,300	25 1/4	up 1/8
Horn & Hardt	176,600	7 1/8	up 3/4
Atari Corp	158,300	7 5/8	unch
Texas Air	147,200	10 7/8	up 1/4